

## **An Assessment of Preliminary Issues on the Implementation of Kiswahili Oral Literature Syllabus for Secondary Schools in Marakwet District, Kenya**

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### **Abstract**

*Following the curriculum review of 2002, Kiswahili oral literature has been given prominence by the Kenya Institute of Education (KIE). It was examined for the first time at the end of 2006 by the Kenya National Examination Council (KNEC). The study assessed the implementation of the Kiswahili oral literature syllabus in secondary schools in Kenya based on Gagne's conditions of learning theory, which states that effective learning only occurs in specific conditions. The study employed descriptive survey research design. The area of study was Marakwet District. The target population included Kiswahili teachers, heads of department and students from all the ten secondary schools in Marakwet District. From this, stratified, purposive and simple random sampling techniques were used to get a sample from the population. The study used both primary and secondary data. Data was gathered through observation, interview schedules and questionnaire. Questionnaire was the main source of primary data. Data from questionnaire was analyzed using frequencies, tables and percentages using SPSS. The major findings of the study indicated that majority of the respondents agreed that Kiswahili oral literature was introduced in the syllabus without a pilot study with most of them saying that the syllabus was introduced without induction of teachers. The study is significant in that it will be useful in guiding the implementation of the new syllabus. In general, it will stimulate further research in the field of Kiswahili literature. The study recommends continuous in-servicing and training of Kiswahili oral literature teachers through seminars, workshops, conferences, symposia and subject panel meetings.*

**Key Words:** Assessment, Preliminary Issues, Implementation, Kiswahili Oral Literature, Secondary School Syllabus, Marakwet District, Kenya

### **Introduction**

Kiswahili oral literature as a subject is very new to people who are used to written tradition of literature. The terms 'folklore', 'unwritten literature', 'popular literature', 'folk literature', or even 'primitive literature' have been used to refer to oral literature (Lusweti, 1992). All these terms suggest that the definition of the subject has not yet been fully agreed upon. Various Kiswahili oral literature scholars have tried to explain this concept from different perspectives. Bukenya (2001) argues that most people know the term oral literature refers to folk stories, songs, poems, riddles and proverbs that are shared by word of mouth. Bukenya (ibid.) further argue that people tell or narrate stories; they recite poems and sing songs; they also exchange riddles, jokes, tongue twisters, and proverbs; therefore, these forms are called 'oral' because they are communicated through utterances.

Wamitila (2003) defines Kiswahili oral literature as a spoken, acted (performed) art whose media is like that of written literature in words. In this definition, the acted and spoken words are the important features of Kiswahili oral literature. Kiswahili Oral literature is a concept that is used to refer to the works that are basically transmitted through narration (Wamitila, 2003). Though most of the works appear in the written form, they continue to depict many characteristics of Kiswahili oral literature. Kiswahili oral literature may also be defined as an art that is intended to reach the audience through narration. Historically, the works of oral literature reach another person through narration. Currently, some works of Kiswahili oral literature are stored in audiotapes, videos and films.

Scholars at Makerere University coined the word 'orature' in 1976 to mean oral literature. This is because they were uneasy with the term 'oral literature'. They argued that 'oral' refers to what is spoken while literature refers to what is written. There was, therefore, a contradiction in the term 'oral literature'. They further argued that if the creative use of written language is literature, the creative use of spoken language should be orature (Karani, 1996). Mulokozi (1983) suggests that oral literature is the thermometer that shows the coldness or hotness of the thoughts and feelings of a people at various periods in relation to various issues and conditions. Basing on the above definitions, it is evident that the meaning of Kiswahili oral literature is not 'obvious'. However, many people agree that Kiswahili oral literature may be used to bring together different forms as myths, songs, tales, riddles and proverbs. Strictly speaking, 'oral' means 'expressed in spoken words', but oral literature includes material in written form as long as it was originally expressed orally. The immediacy of the spoken word contributes to the richness and beauty of the written language.

### **Need of Oral Literature**

Kiswahili oral literature is meaningful and useful to us in different ways. Oral literature is not only material from the past but equally important, a great deal of new material is being composed and performed today. People everywhere make up stories, jokes, sayings, and songs about their experiences and share them by performing them to one another. Both old and new material performed by oral artists is relevant and useful to us in a number of ways. According to Bukenya (2001), there is need for oral literature as it serves a number of functions. These include:

#### **a) Practical Language Skills**

Since Kiswahili oral literature is an utterance, taking part in it encourages us to improve our skills in speaking, reciting and singing (Bukenya, 2001). It also helps us to develop memories, our abilities to think fast and systematically and in communicating logically. This is to say, if one is asked to tell a story, he will inevitably find that he has to call on all these skills at once.

#### **b) Oral Literature for Education and Awareness**

Oral literature plays a major role in the field of education. African children, for example, are made to learn myths and legends because they contain information that is true, or thought to be true (Lusweti, 1992). Even today, many historians have come to realize the importance of oral traditions as sources of historical evidence. Similarly, proverbs are often regarded as the distilled wisdom of the past generations and are taught to children so that the values of the people as they are expressed in proverbs are also considered to be important in their own right. Whereas in most communities proverbs are supposed to be used by adults - for it would be ridiculous for children to speak to their parents in proverbs - the riddles are for children. This is because Kiswahili riddles teach children the characteristics of people, plants, animals among other things in their cultural setting, as well as some features of technology and social structure. Stories are also recognized by people as important in the education of children. Most of them are moral stories and so teach the children moral values. According to Bukenya (2001), Kiswahili oral literature makes us aware of ourselves, fellow human beings, environment and their history. The stories, songs, proverbs, riddles and jokes in Kiswahili oral literature use colourful words and vivid images to describe human beings, their feelings and their behaviour towards one other.

#### **c) Oral Literature as a Means of Social Control**

Lusweti (1992) points out that oral literature helps to maintain cultural values and accepted ways of social behaviour. It is, therefore, widely used to express social approval and disapproval, and to exercise social control. Proverbs, songs of ridicule, riddles and even stories are used to publicly disgrace people who do not behave well in the society. On the other hand, proverbs, praise names and praise songs are used to give recognition and reward to those who conform to rules in the society.

#### **d) Oral Literature for Entertainment**

Amusement is obviously the most important function of oral literature and so in Kiswahili oral literature, any piece of Kiswahili oral literature a story or a song, a riddle, or a proverb must have immediate value of entertaining the audience (Lusweti, 1992). If a story is not interesting, for example, it is not likely to attract the audience and keep it attentive up to the end. Lusweti (1992) points out that entertainment may merely be achieved through amusement or it may be realized through dramatization and dance.

Stories, proverbs, riddles, poems and songs attract active audience participation through dance. According to Bukenya (2001), Kiswahili oral literature soothes the mind and refreshes the brain. An exciting well-told story, a sweet melodious and rhythmic song or even jokes or riddles play this role perfectly. Bukenya (ibid.) further says that entertainment is a useful means of educating and informing people. Some forms of Kiswahili oral literature such as stories and oral traditions usually help to make valid social institutions and rituals. Even the Christian Bible is based on Jewish myths. Myths can be cited as an authority on questions of religious beliefs and even ritual procedure.

#### **e) Oral Literature for Emotional Release and Recreation**

According to Lusweti (1992), songs and dances sometimes provide emotional release from restrictions imposed on the individual by the society. When people find themselves bored or frustrated, they sing and dance, and in so doing they become happy again. Jokes, through which people may criticize and laugh at those in power in a way that they cannot do normally in speech are useful as a means of emotional release. Even riddles, sometimes involve sexual references which would be considered obscene in normal speech. Topical songs in particular are good means of emotional release. They are used for expressing feelings and protests against oppression. In stories, the familiar theme of a rise from poverty to riches also serves to give hope to the poor people. Viewed in this light, Kiswahili oral literature reveals man's attempt to escape from his own problems in society, and from cruelty of fellow men.

#### **f) Oral Literature for Political Power and Change**

Today in Kenya, many politicians use topical songs to encourage people to vote for them during elections. The songs may be used to ridicule opponents and to enrich the prestige of campaigning aspirants. Songs have also been used to honour political leaders, for example Jomo Kenyatta (Lusweti, 1992).

#### **g) Kiswahili Oral Literature for Cultural Continuity**

Wamitila (2002) avers that when the functions of education, social control, social power and emotional release are taken together, it can be seen that Kiswahili oral literature has one broad function of maintaining the stability of a people's culture and ensuring its continuity. It operates to ensure that the culture of a people's continues to exist, and is handed on from one generation to another.

### **Contents/Style and Functions of Kiswahili Oral Literature**

Kiswahili oral literature encompasses riddles (vitendawili), proverbs (methali), poetry (mashairi), and oral narratives (hadithi).

#### **a) Riddles (Vitendawili)**

Most of the riddles found among our communities take the form of question-and-answer and are brief statements. As such, in Kiswahili, the question does not always appear in the interrogative form (Mulokozi, 1989). In actual fact, most of the *vitendawilis* are four-tier complementary statements in which the riddle player requests the audience to pay attention to a coming riddle and the audience accepts the challenge. The riddle player throws out a statement referring analogously to something, which the audience must try to identify. Riddles are plays on imagery and symbolism.

#### **b) Proverbs (Methali)**

Proverbs in Kiswahili and even in other languages are usually short and concern thoughts and ideas familiar to the users. Proverbs are brief, clearly expressed figurative comments on situations. A person observes a situation in real life and wants to assess it or pass judgment on it. For example, a person who pretends to be very honest and upright and is found out to be a crook; instead of the observer saying things are not always what they seem, he may use a proverb like *Kumwashia taa kipofu ni kuharibu mafuta* (Lighting a lamp for a blind man is wasting of paraffin). Unlike riddles, proverbs use words creatively.

#### **c) Lyric and Poetry**

Lyric and poetry includes songs with many diverse functions: lullabies, love songs, songs to accompany dancing and drinking, political and topical songs, war songs, initiation songs, work songs, laments or dirges, religious songs and many others (Miruka, 1999).

Lyric poetry employs rhythm and alliteration to bring out style in the oral poetry. Repetition has also been used to create not only emphasis but also rhythm. The form distinguishes this form of Kiswahili oral literature from any other ordinary text.

### **Learning and Teaching of Oral Literature in Kiswahili**

There is need to emphasize the idea of giving Kiswahili oral language opportunities in the teaching of Kiswahili in Kenyan secondary schools classrooms. This is because, as a national language of Kenya, the use of Kiswahili in communication is more crucial in oral than in the written mode. In a multilingual setting like in the Kenyan society, oral skills in Kiswahili (the language being a national language) are very vital. Language helps a person to convey information, thoughts and ideas to others and by the same means, receive the same from other people. Therefore, the nature of language is strictly functional and its purpose is to promote communication. Effective communication needs both the material to be communicated and the medium to be used to communicate the material. This medium is Kiswahili oral language. This clearly reveals that Kiswahili is very crucial in oral communication for the majority of Kenyans. By 2005, about five million pupils had graduated from primary and 650,000 from secondary schools (*Daily Nation*, 2005, Feb. 28). This means that by the year 2020, the population of Kiswahili speakers will have increased by several million people. Therefore, oral skills should be developed to enable learners to communicate coherently and fluently while in school, and in the society after leaving school. The goal of developing learners' oral language is to increase their communicative abilities which are essential in real life situations where language is used in a variety of contexts. This calls upon teachers to give their learners adequate opportunities to put language learned into oral use.

Although oral skills are vital in Kiswahili, most learners exhibit lack of mastery of spoken Kiswahili. Various people have given causes for lack of mastery of spoken skills. This could probably be due to the fact that learners are not given adequate opportunities to put language learnt into oral use in the classroom. Magawi and Wanyoike (*The Standard*, 1998, Dec 12) attribute lack of oral skills to inherited colonial mentality which viewed Kiswahili as a slave language. Bryne (1976) notes that at times it is difficult to teach oral language in the classroom since it is best learned outside the classroom. It appears that students speak the mother tongue which is spoken in their homes. They use English as a medium of communication while in the school and *Sheng* in their own communication (Obura, 1991). Kiswahili does not seem given a place in their communication. The only opportunity they have for speaking standard Kiswahili is the one provided in the classroom. The fact that Kiswahili is a classroom language, therefore, justifies greater emphasis on oral communication in the classroom.

One of the objectives of teaching Kiswahili as stated in the 8-4-4 syllabus (Republic of Kenya, Ministry of Education, 1986, revised 1992) Objective 2 (b), is to develop learners' ability to express themselves logically, coherently, explicitly and intelligently both in speech and in the written mode. Graduates of the present 8-4-4 system of Education, which is terminal at every stage with more emphasis on practical skills than examination, are expected to contribute towards nation building. One can only effectively contribute to the society if he/she speaks clearly, enunciates his/her words clearly and uses the standard language accepted in educated circles. The surest tool of sharing the knowledge, skills and attitudes acquired in school with the rest of the society, with a substantial population of 30.6% (Census Report 1994) being illiterate, is the spoken language. This objective can be achieved through the oral medium of communication which is shared by most people in the society (Whiteley, 1974). Therefore, a school leaver needs to be effective in use of oral communication skills in Kiswahili for social applications.

Ideally, it can be said that giving Kiswahili-learners adequate opportunities to speak while in the classroom will improve their oracy and by extension, their linguistic abilities. This will in turn enable them to overcome such pitfalls as stammering, unnecessary hesitations which result from inadequate knowledge of vocabulary, ineffective pronunciation and lack of smooth flow in discourse. All these pitfalls manifest themselves in unnecessary pauses. Adequate oral opportunities would not only assist learners to be eloquent speakers of Kiswahili but they would also excel in their examinations. Since the above pitfalls are witnessed in everyday interactions in Kiswahili, they are indications of a problem in the teaching of Kiswahili. Oral examinations could serve as an incentive to improve oral skills in Kiswahili. Unfortunately, such examinations have not been administered in Kiswahili in secondary schools in Kenya. Oral examinations in Kiswahili were once thought necessary.

Harries (1989) advocated for its administration. Writing on the *Nationalization of Kiswahili in Kenya*, in part Harries (ibid.) observes that:

The 1970 statement required that all candidates for any government office were required to be able to address a group of people in good Kiswahili for not less than ten minutes... all civil servants however, in all government bodies and in the diplomatic service were to pass an oral examination in Kiswahili (p. 125).

A thorough look at this un-implemented policy reveals that it was laid down for a wrong target. This is due to the fact that civil servants could not be examined orally without having been taught oral skills. Given that schools are promising agents of change, such a policy could have been implemented at the secondary school level. Despite the vitality of oral skills in Kiswahili, the pitfalls mentioned above militate against the learners' mastery of phonetics, semantics and syntactic aspects in Kiswahili. Therefore, students are not competent to speak Kiswahili not only in school but even after leaving school. The reported inability of learners and even graduates of Kiswahili to communicate orally is what prompted the author to investigate the teaching of Kiswahili oral literature.

### **Importance of Understanding and Proper Implementation of Kiswahili Oral Literature Syllabus**

By 2002 it was four years since Kiswahili oral literature was given prominence in the Kiswahili syllabus (KIE, 2002). Initially, it was not treated with the seriousness it deserved, but today it has been given emphasis. It was examined for the first time at the end of last year (2006) by the Kenya National Examination Council (KNEC). In the last eight years, the author has taught Kiswahili literature in different schools before the curriculum review of 2002 and has observed that teachers handle Kiswahili oral literature with the least seriousness and this could be because this section was not examinable at the end of the four-year secondary school programme. Another issue of concern is that the syllabus was not piloted as the case ought to have been, but was only introduced to schools without preparing teachers.

The teacher was not given enough preparation, especially in handling new aspects of the syllabus. That is, the teacher was not prepared through workshop and in-service courses. Furthermore, nothing was done to ascertain the practicability of the new curriculum through piloting before implementation such as assessing availability of necessary facilities in schools. Such factors force some of the teachers to resist some changes when they are introduced. Teacher preparation at colleges and universities has not catered for all aspects that have been included in the revised curriculum. It is quite unfortunate that majority of teachers did not study oral literature and how to teach it in teacher training colleges or while at the university. Moi University offers oral literature as a core course, but others like Kenyatta University do not and yet they are expected to prepare teachers to handle oral literature in Kiswahili in the field. In support of this, Materu (1987) says that although oral literature is an important genre, its teaching has a very short history in our secondary schools and that the major problem teachers have after introducing oral literature in class is how they should teach it. So how do these teachers teach Kiswahili oral literature?

The performance of Kiswahili language in general in Marakwet District is low. Statistics from the District Education Office show that Kiswahili has had the lowest mean grade in KCSE for some time now. For example, in 2004, Marakwet District had a mean score of 3.002 and 3.561 in 2005 in Kiswahili compared to 3.215 and 3.654 in English during the same period. So, how will the performance of Kiswahili be after introduction of Kiswahili oral literature? In view of the above, the author in this paper analyses the implementation of the Kiswahili oral literature syllabus based on a study of schools in Marakwet District.

### **Limitations of the Study**

The study focused on the teaching of Kiswahili oral literature in a rural setting among secondary school students who are homogenous in culture, character and socio-economic expositions. The findings, therefore, only apply to similar populations and may not be generalized to mean that the problems revealed here are the same among all secondary school students. The research should have covered the whole nation. The fact that it only covered one district with only 26 schools compared to other districts is in itself a limitation. Kiswahili oral literature lacks sufficient literature. However, literature on English oral literature was borrowed to supplement that available on Kiswahili oral literature.

### ***Materials and Methods***

The study was carried out in Marakwet District, Rift Valley Province in Kenya. The District is one of the nineteen (19) districts in Rift Valley Province. It has seven administrative divisions and two political constituencies. Its headquarters is Kapsowar Centre. It is situated on the Northern part of the Rift Valley. It borders Pokot district to the North-West, Baringo to the East, Trans Nzoia to the West and Keiyo to the South. The District covers an area of 2784KM<sup>2</sup> with a population of approximately 140,629 people (Kenya Bureau of Statistics, 2000). The research adopted a descriptive survey study design targeting secondary schools in the District. According to the Ministry of Education data bank (Marakwet DEO's Office), there are four boys' boarding, four girls' boarding, twelve mixed boarding and six mixed day schools. Therefore, there are twenty-six secondary schools. Of these, two are Provincial, twenty-four are District secondary schools. The target population of the study included all trained Kiswahili teachers. These teachers were both diploma and degree holders.

The study adopted purposive, stratified and simple random sampling techniques. Stratified sampling technique was used to categorize schools on the basis of school type into boys' only school, girls' only and mixed schools. Out of the twenty-six secondary schools in the District, two boys', two girls' and six mixed schools were selected to participate in the study. The author selected a total of ten schools out of twenty-six schools because this represented a 38.4% of the target population. Simple random sampling technique was used to select a sample of one hundred and sixty students from Forms Two and Three classes in the ten secondary schools. Purposive sampling was used to sample heads of department in all the sampled schools in order to get vital information about the implementation of Kiswahili oral literature. In the study, Forms Two and Three students were chosen on the basis of long exposure towards Kiswahili oral literature in terms of time and content coverage.

The collection of data for the study involved the use of questionnaire, observation and interview schedules. From the 10 secondary schools, 20 Kiswahili teachers were selected to fill the questionnaire while 16 students in each school were selected to fill the questionnaire. The author personally observed each school environment such as the classrooms, the libraries and other learning sites. Two lessons were observed in each school, one in Form Two and one in Form Three giving a total of twenty lesson observations for the purpose of the study. The author administered the interview schedule personally and engaged the participants in a general discussion about the implementation, attitude of teachers and students towards Kiswahili oral literature to create rapport before administering the interview schedule. Ten Kiswahili oral literature teachers were interviewed to solicit information about implementation, facilities and resources, attitude of teachers and students towards Kiswahili oral literature.

Data analysis was conducted using the SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Scientists) Computer package. Descriptive methods were employed in analyzing data where frequencies and proportions were used in interpreting the respondent's perception of issues raised in the sets of questionnaire so as to answer the research questions.

### ***Results and Discussion***

The purpose of the study was to investigate the teaching of Kiswahili oral literature in secondary schools. The author, therefore, found it paramount to start from the roots and introduction of this subject. As a result, the main purpose of this paper was to discuss how Kiswahili oral literature is being implemented in secondary schools after it was declared an examinable subject. This also called for investigating the state of Kiswahili oral literature before being declared an examinable subject in 2002. This foundation of issues laid a firm background to understanding the 'phenomena'.

The author found it important to establish the position of the respondents in terms of hierarchy of power. This gave reason to judge the responses of the various respondents owing to the knowledge of their background. For example, a head of department who says that he/she does not know the instructional material literature in school is likely to be judged as negligent and irresponsible. The major findings of the study indicated that the majority, 14(70.0%), of the respondents were class teachers. A significant number, 6(30.0%), of the respondents comprised heads of department.

The heads of departments were vital to the study because, in addition to being the heads of a subject area, the head of department literally ran the activities of that subject in the school.

They provide for teaching resources such as chalks, student text books, teachers' reference books, instructional media to be adopted in the subject and field trips. The majority, 14(70.0%), of the respondents comprised ordinary class teachers. Teachers (two in each school) are the main implementers of the curriculum on the ground.

### **Training in Kiswahili Oral Literature**

Assuming that instruction enhances learning of Kiswahili oral literature, there is need for effective teacher training. The ideal teacher training, among other things, exposes the student-teacher to a variety of current second language teaching theories and methods. In addition, good teacher training continues after graduation of the student teachers. Good training is, therefore, not a one-time affair but a continuous process in which the teachers' skills are continually updated. Training of Kiswahili teachers in Kenya is beset with a number of problems and this is likely to affect the quality of teaching and learning of Kiswahili oral literature. In the first place, some Teacher Training Colleges in Kenya like Kenyatta University do not offer Kiswahili oral literature as a core course in the teacher education curriculum. Secondly, many Kiswahili teachers are second language speakers of the language with varying degrees of competence. Many of these teachers do not become language teachers by choice but by default. Indeed, many of them may not have had a solid background in the language.

It is as a result of the foregoing facts that the authors found it paramount to establish if teachers had been specially trained to teach Kiswahili oral literature. The major finding indicated that the majority, 16(80%), of the respondents had been specially trained to teach Kiswahili oral literature. This indicates that quite a significant number of respondents were trained to teach Kiswahili oral literature. In addition, it was established that this special training was the core course the respondents undertook while in college. Some, 4(20%), of the respondents studied in colleges that do not offer Kiswahili oral literature as core course.. The training and re-training of teachers is crucial. Ipara (2004) argues that the course for teaching Kiswahili oral literature does not emphasize on oral literature; instead, aspects of language and grammar together with written literature are emphasized. Fullan (1982) points out that the quality of education and learning depends heavily on the competence of the teacher. Fullan (ibid.) argues that teacher training is the major aspect of teacher competence and should be continuously updated. This should apply to Kiswahili oral literature teachers in preparation for teaching in secondary schools.

### **Implementation of the Syllabus**

One of the objectives of the study was to assess the implementation of Kiswahili oral literature syllabus in secondary schools. The author argued that implementation of a subject is a process that requires effort of all stakeholders involved and the goodwill as well. For example, for successful implementation of a subject, there must have been some pilot study conducted. It is from this understanding that the study sought to establish the process of implementation of the syllabus.

According to the findings of the study, majority, 12(60%), of the respondents said that Kiswahili oral literature was introduced in the syllabus without proper consultation. This implies that Kiswahili oral literature was implemented with a lot of urgency ignoring important steps that ought to have been followed such as conducting a pilot study on the viability of the subject. In addition, a pilot study would have established the status of Kiswahili oral literature in the society and come up with recommendation for and against the introduction of Kiswahili oral literature in secondary schools. Such a study would have shown the need for introduction of Kiswahili oral literature say by citing the 'classroom status' that Kiswahili language has assumed. The classroom situation arises whereby students and teachers only speak in Kiswahili while teaching/learning of Kiswahili in the subject. Outside the classroom both teachers and students use English, mother tongues and *Sheng*. This scenario buries Kiswahili oral literature, because it denies students the socialization process which in they can use Kiswahili creatively. In the same breath, a pilot study would have detailed steps and strategies to make the attainment of set goals and objectives feasible. The researcher, views this scenario as a drawback towards Kiswahili oral literature. This is because it was just introduced without a pilot study preceding the introduction. This might have brought confusion to the teachers and the students who were suddenly introduced to Kiswahili oral literature. The authors, therefore, sought to establish if teachers and heads of departments were consulted.

According to the findings of the study, majority 18(90%), of the respondents said that they were not consulted. It is evident that neither teachers nor heads of department were consulted before the introduction of Kiswahili oral literature as an examinable subject in 2002.

The author also established that the head teachers were also not consulted, therefore the question that begs for an answer is: who were consulted before the introduction of Kiswahili oral literature? Why were the major stakeholders such as teachers not consulted? Teachers are the main implementers of the curriculum, and leaving them out of the consultation process only creates some future problems for the education system. This state of affairs prompted the author to determine if there was any induction programme for the teachers before implementation.

The major findings of the study indicated that majority 14(70%), of the respondents said that the syllabus was introduced without exposing school teachers to induction courses. There can be no more credible evidence than the subjects themselves admitting that there had been a flaw in the system. According to most teachers, leaving them out of the whole process delineated them with the education process of which there are supposed to be critical players. In the past, such a case has been presented with differing opinion of teachers on the subject matter. Some teachers may start arguing that a certain subject area is above a certain level while others may feel that it is for a lower grade. Preliminary research conducted by Government of Kenya (1976) in various Kenyan Primary and secondary schools also shows that there is an over-reliance on outdated methods of Kiswahili teaching. There is, for example, an over-reliance on the methodology of audio-lingualism. Teachers seem to emphasize listening, imitation, repetition and substitution.

Another approach is teaching language as a system. In this approach, students are taught to manipulate grammatical language structures (Johnson, 1982, p. 9). Ideas based on the communicative philosophy of language teaching, in which learning takes place in the context of communication, seem totally unknown to the teachers (Littlewood, 1981). Moreover, the teachers appeared to be the centre of all activity in the classroom, a phenomenon that leaves little opportunity for the learners to produce the target language. Although there is no teaching method that could authoritatively be said to be superior to the others, and although we are by no means certain how people learn languages, what the foregoing shows is that the teaching of Kiswahili oral literature in Kenya does not significantly benefit from knowledge of current teaching theories and methods (Finnochiaro & Brumfit, 1983). The teaching of Kiswahili language does not also benefit from continuous training of teachers. For example, in research done by Kembo (1994), it was found that over 60% of the teachers in one of Kenya's Provinces had not attended any seminar or course for the teaching of English or Kiswahili for several years. Such a scenario is likely to negatively affect the quality of both teaching and learning of Kiswahili oral literature.

### ***Conclusion and Recommendations***

It is evident from the study that the implementation of Kiswahili oral literature was done with a lot of urgency. As a result, it was established that many core areas that teachers ought to have been prepared for were ignored. This included lack of in-service courses in preparation for teaching the course; in addition, Kiswahili teachers and heads of department in the study claimed that they were not consulted before implementing the Kiswahili oral literature syllabus.

In order to improve the training of Kiswahili teachers, there is need for specialization in the teaching of the language. There is also need for teachers to be exposed to current theories and methods of language teaching during and after training. Teachers should be kept abreast of current developments in language teaching, including methods through regular seminars and in-service courses. If these measures are taken, it is likely that the teaching of Kiswahili oral literature will become more effective than it is at present. The author also recommends continuous in-service training through seminars, workshops, conferences, symposia and subject panel meetings for Kiswahili oral literature teachers. This will update them on the various effective approaches towards the teaching-learning process of Kiswahili oral literature.



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